basis of the requirements to be indicated by the United Nations.

Efficient Functioning of Passport Offices

1680. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 965 given in the Rajya Sabha on 2nd December, 1991 and state:

(a) the number of passport applications pending in various offices on this date officewise;

(b) whether Government are aware that the public is unhappy with the service given by our passport issuing authorities;

(c) whether the staff in all such offices has been given orientation for public dealing; and

(d) details of steps proposed to be taken to reduce delays and hostile attitude to public in passport offices all over the country?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Information is given in Statement—I. (*See* below)

(b) The Government is aware that services rendered to public get delayed due to manpower shortage and time taken in receiving reports from State police on applicants.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir, from time to time necessity for polite and curteous public dealing has been emphasised on officers and staff of passport offices. Passport procedures have been simplified with a view to expediting issue of passports. Details of steps taken are given in Statement—II.

Statement-I

Following table gives total number of applications for passports at various stages of processing in each passport office as on 2nd December, 1991:—

1.	RPO, Ahmedabad	27,917
2.	PO, Bangalore	21,836
3.	PO, Bareilly	20,687
4.	PO, Bhopal	4,518
5.	PO, Bhubaneshwar	881
6.	RPO, Bombay	63,262
7.	RPO, Calcutta	11,94[illegible]
8.	RPO, Chandigarh	53,531
9.	RPO, Cochin	1,25,769
10.	RPO, Delhi	16,04[illegible]
11	PO, Hyderabad	73,02[illegible]
12.	PO, Goa	2,68[illegible]
13	PO, Guwahati	1,96[illegible]
		(as on 22-11-9

14.	PO, Jaipur	51,085
15.	PO, Jalandhar	60,129
16.	PO, Koshikode	94,437
17	PO, Lucknow	59,296
18.	RPO, Madras	38,213
19	PO, Nagpur	1,046
20	PO, Patna	19,644
21.	PO, Trichy	72,322

Statement — II

Details of steps taken to reduce delays :—

1. Following categories of applicants have been exempted from requirement of Prior Police and CID verification before issue of passports to them:

(a) All Government servants and Employees of Public Sector Undertaking who alongwith their applications submit No Objection Certificate (NOC) and Verification Certificate signed by their Head of Department on official stationery.

(b) Where an applicant submits his application accompanied with a verification certificate signed by either;

(i) A Deputy Secretary to the Government of India and above;

(ii) a Joint Secretary and above to a State Government;

(iii) a Sub-Divisional Magistrate and above;

(iv) District Superintendant of Police and above;

(c) Retired Gazetted Government Servants.

(d) Former Members of the Union Parliament (Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha) and State Legislatures (Assemblies and Councils).

2. In all other cases Regional Passport Officers|Passports Officers are otherwise satisfied with genuineness of applicant, a passport may be issued where Police and CID do not send their reports in 4 weeks after despatching personal particulars forms to them.

3. Children below the age of 15 years may be issued passport without police verification.

4. Persons holding normal passports may be issued fresh passports after 10 years of its validity without prior Police|CID verification.

5. Furthermore, in order to ensure expeditious clearance monitoring of passports issued and pending is done through weekly progress reports in respect of each passport office.

6. With effect from 16th August, 1990, fresh passports are being issued for a period of ten years at a stretch so that a passport holder need not visit a passport office for renewal after first five years as was the case before August, 1990.

7. With a view to increase productivity of Passport Offices, it has been decided that a passport writer should write 50 passports per day alongwith making entries in passport register. Each official detailed in the Indexing section should screen at least 100 applications per day without overtime.

Rearranging the Priorities of our Diplomatic Missions Abroad

1681. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the plans to rearrange and re-orient the priorities of our diplomatic missions abroad keeping in view the recent changes in the international order;

(b) what steps are being taken to emphasis economic relationships and development of trade overseas, by our diplomatic missions; and

(c) what fresh guidelines have been issued in the last six months to prepare and guide our missions to better serve the need of the hour?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) The new economic policies of the Government are to a significant extent in response to the changes taking place in the global economic environment. The priorities of our missions abroad have been accordingly reoriented so that diplomacy can effectively subserve the country's economic interests. Clear cut guidelines have been given to the missions and an inter-active process has been established between the missions and this Ministry through which upto date information on changes in economic policies and procedures is provided to the missions on a continuous basis.

U. S. suggestion to Avoid Nuclear Cooperation with Iran

1682. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bush Administration has strongly urged India to avoid any form of nuclear cooperation with Iran, even under safeguards, because of lack of evidence that Tehran is genuinely committed to the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the state at which the proposed sale of 10 MW reactor to Iran stands at present?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) The US has expressed reservations to a number of countries, including India, on the subject of nuclear co-operation with Iran.

(b) Government have noted the position of the US.

(c) While there were some preliminary contracts, there have been no further developments in the matter.

India's Role at G-15 meeting at Caracas

1683. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prime Minister attended the G-15 meeting at Caracas, Venezuela during the last month; and

(b) if so, the outcome of the above meeting and the role played by India there at?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Summit Level Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation (G-15) that met in Caracas from 27—29 November, 1991. adopted a Joint Communique putting forward their point of view on major international economic issues and embodying decisions to promote South-South cooperation through specific projects.